Environmental Court

†364. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration for setting up environmental courts at the earliest with a view to giving fundamental right of clean potable water to.citizens and to settle other issues of such type;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether task of reviewing the la*ws regarding environment in the country has been undertaken in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE INTHE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV): (a) and (b) No Sir.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Panel report on Bt. Cotton

365. SHRIV.V.RAGHAVAN:

SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Panel report on Bt. Cotton fudged" appearing in'The Statesman" New Delhi edition dated 14, January, 2003;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) whether Government will conduct a comprehensive and objective Scientific assessment of the benefits of the Bt. Cotton as demanded by the Greeenpeace activists; if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE INTHE'MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV): (a) Yes Sir,

(b) and (c) The Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) accorded conditional clearance for introduction of three Bt. cotton hybrids

† Original notice cf the question was received in Hindi.

namely BT MECH 162, BT MECH 184, BT MECH 12 into the environment for a period of three years from April 2002 to March 2005.The conditions *inter-alia* include plantation of a non Bt. refuge around the periphery of the Bt. fields, monitoring the susceptibility of bollworms to Bt. gene *vis-a-vis* baseline susceptibility data, assessing the possible impacts on non-target insects and crops, and undertaking an awareness and education programme for farmers.The three approved hybrid varieties are presently under cultivation in six States namely Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh andTamil Nadu. Some of the areas where these hybride varieties are being cultivated have recently been monitored by the Committees constituted by this Ministry for each State. The Committees have made comprehensive and objective assessment of the agronomical benefits as well as environmental of the Bt. Cotton in the field and have found them to be performing satisfactorily.

Progress in Yamuna Action Plan

366. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Japan Bank of International Cooperation had sanctioned aid of Rs. 164 crore for the Yamuna Action Plan (YAP);

(b) if so, when, and the specific works under the YAP to be financed therewith; and

(c) the progress so far made in implementation thereof and the expenditure incurred thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE INTHE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV): (a) to (c) A project for cleaning of river Yamuna in Haryana, Delhi and U.R namely the Yamuna Action Plan was approved for an amount of Rs. 732 crore. Out of this, the cost of works funded by the Japan Bank for International Cooperation is Rs. 712 crore. Under this project, works amounting to Rs.490 crore were approved in April, 1993 and the balance of Rs. 222 crore were approved in may 2001. Out of the total approved cost of Rs. 712 crore, the cost of works approved for Delhi is Rs. 187 crore which includes an amount of Rs. 150 crore for construction of toilet complexes in unsewered area.The specific works taken up underYAP are: interception and diversion of sewage, construction of sewage treatment plants, community toilet